

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

The specification has been amended to correct minor informalities. Please note that page 15, line 7 of the specification does not recite "fourth allocation units" (see page 2 of the Office Action), and thus no correction was made in that portion of the specification.

Claims 8, 9, 16 and 17 are currently being amended. None of these amendments narrows the scope of these claims.

No claims are currently being added or canceled.

This amendment amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-18 remain pending in this application.

Applicants appreciate the indication in the Office Action that claims 1-7, 10-15 and 18 are allowed, as well as the indication that claims 8, 9, 16 and 17 contain allowable subject matter.

In the Office Action, claims 9 and 16 were objected to because of informalities noted on page 2 of the Office Action. Claims 9 and 16 have been amended to correct these informalities (without narrowing the scope of these claims).

In the Office Action, claims 8 and 16-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, for the reasons set forth on page 3 of the Office Action. Claims 8, 16 and 17 have been amended to correct the indefiniteness problems noted in the Office Action (without narrowing the scope of these claims since the problems noted were not substantive in nature), and it

is submitted that presently pending claims 8 and 16-17 are fully compliant with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Accordingly, since there are no other objections or rejections raised in the Office Action, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

July 9, 2004

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